

John Cosans

Midwest Abrasive Company
Owosso

Tom Hicks

September 21, 1972

On September 14, 1972, staff made a visit to Midwest Abrasive Company to determine if any wastewater was being discharged to the surface waters of the State.

Mr. K. Bratt, General Manager, was contacted and it was explained that several years ago this company was guilty of discharging a rouge material into the Shiawassee River. This turned the water red for several hundred feet downstream.

Mr. Bratt explained the present process for settling out most of these solids prior to discharge to a storm drain.

Staff examined the discharge and found about 1 gallon per minute flowing from the settling chamber. Dye was placed in this discharge and staff checked the river for two hours and the dye did not show up in the river. The city officials and the waste treatment plant operators were contacted and if any indication of dye showed up, they would contact our office. None has been reported to date.

The reason given for this discharge not getting to the river was due to construction of the new bridge, several pipes in the area were disconnected and not connected to either the storm drain or the sanitary sewer. It is staff opinion that Midwest Abrasive does not have a direct discharge to the river. The overflow from this settling tank must be seeping into the ground somewhere between the plant and the river.

Another question was brought up about the disposal of semi-solid waste from this company. The material consists of animal resins and phenolic resins used in making abrasive paper and belts for sanding.

In 1970, the company had contacted a solid waste firm to handle this material. The firm, believing it to be a liquid industrial waste, contacted our office and was informed of Act 136 and the necessity of being licensed. They re-contacted Midwest Abrasive and told them they would no longer handle this waste.

The company began storing the material in barrels and by July of 1972, had accumulated about 180. They arranged for an employee, Mr. Aurrant, to take them to his farm northwest of Owosso and dispose of them by burial.

The question is if the material in the barrels becomes stabilized in time and would not be harmful to ground water sources. Samples of the material was obtained and it appears to be a solid type of waste and would be under Act 87 rather than Act 136.

A meeting with the Solid Waste Section of the Michigan Department of Public Health will be set up for determining if the material can be buried.



John Cosens
page two
September 21, 1972

The waste generated is in a liquid state for three to ten days and handling this material from now on should be disposal by incineration. The company has been given the names of firms with approved incinerators and will contact them in the near future.

It is still a question whether the waste can be handled in a liquid state or will set up too fast. It was also pointed out to the company that perhaps a material can be added to keep the waste liquid, therefore easier to handle.

TH:bk

cc: J. Bohunsky

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